

# Factores que contribuyen al sexting en adolescentes españoles: una revisión bibliográfica

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**Resumen:** El *sexting* se ha descrito como la práctica de enviar o recibir imágenes con contenido sexual por medio de dispositivos tecnológicos. Aunque la definición no se ha consensuado del todo por los expertos, debido a que es un término que está evolucionando muy deprisa, este reciente fenómeno parece ser una práctica creciente en los adolescentes. A nivel estatal, resulta necesario analizar los pocos hallazgos que ya existen en cuanto al conocimiento del sexting en general y, en particular, sobre los factores predisponentes. Por este motivo, en el siguiente trabajo se presenta una revisión bibliográfica sobre los estudios cuantitativos realizados a nivel nacional. Las bases de datos, donde se han recolectado los informes, son: Google Scholar, Redalyc y PsycINFO. En estas se han introducido las palabras clave “sexting, adolescents y Spain” y los criterios de inclusión utilizados han sido: solo informes publicados entre 2015 y 2020, en idioma español o inglés, en los que el texto completo esté disponible y que utilizaran una muestra de adolescentes. El número de resultados que dio la búsqueda fue de 321 y tras realizar un cribado según los criterios de inclusión, la cantidad de artículos leídos al completo ha sido 37. Los finalmente incluidos en esta revisión son 8 ya que todos aunaban información válida y complementaria acerca de variables, tanto de personalidad como psicosociales, que pueden asociarse a un mayor uso del sexting en adolescentes. Los resultados muestran que la alta Extraversión, una baja Responsabilidad, la edad y la necesidad de popularidad son factores que aumentan la probabilidad de tener comportamientos de sexting, además no se encuentran distinciones de sexo significativas para realizar estas prácticas. La investigación en este tipo de comportamientos abre puertas a posibles métodos de prevención bien fundamentados, donde se incluyan estas variables de personalidad, que pueden ser aplicados en los institutos junto con otros módulos dentro de programas de educación sexual.

**Palabras Clave:** adolescentes; sexting; personalidad; España; revisión; psicosocial

**Abstract:** *Sexting* has been explained as the practice of sending or receiving images with sexual content through technological devices. Although the definition has not been fully agreed by the experts, due to the fact that it is a term that is evolving very fast, this recent phenomenon seems to be a growing practice in adolescents. At the state level, it is necessary to analyze the few findings that already exist regarding knowledge of sexting in general and, in particular, about predisposing factors. For this reason the following work presents a literature review of the quantitative studies carried out at the national level. The databases, in which the reports have been collected, are: Google Scholar, Redalyc and PsycINFO. The keywords “sexting, adolescents and Spain” have been used in these and the inclusion factors used have been: only reports published between 2015 and 2020, in the Spanish or English language, which the full text is available and which uses a sample of teenagers. The number of results that the search gave was 321 and after the screening according to the inclusion criteria was carried out, the number of articles read in full was 37. The last ones included in this review are 8 since all of them gathered valid and complementary information about variables, both personality and psychosocial, that can be associated with a greater use of sexting in adolescents. The results found in high Extraversion, low responsibility, age, and the need for weight factors that increase the probability of having sexting behaviors, and no sex distinctions are found to carry out these practices. Research in this type of behavior opens doors to possible well-founded prevention methods, where these personality variables are included, which can be applied in institutes along with other modules within sex education programs.

**Keywords:** adolescents; sexting; personality; Spain; review; psychosocial

# FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO SEXTING IN SPANISH ADOLESCENTS: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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## INTRODUCTION

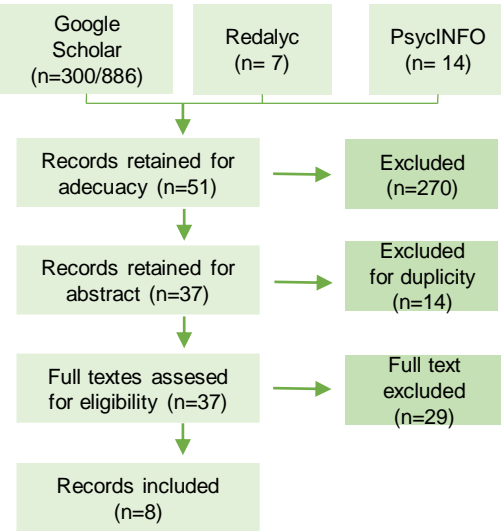
The sending of sexual content over the Internet or **sexting** is a relatively new phenomenon and is associated with growing and easier Internet access as well as with the generalization of smartphone use. And this type of situations are expanding in the adolescent's environment (Gámez-Guadix & De Santisteban, 2018). Most of them perceive in their social reality that sexting is an habitual practice at their age and they also agree that, although the goal is recreational, it can have very bad consequences such as cyberbullying or coercion by classmates, especially towards girls (Castro, Ruido, Fernández & Garrido, 2018). While in other countries this phenomenon has been deepened, in Spain, quantitative studies about the behavior of sexting are still scarce (Gámez-Guadix & De Santisteban, 2018). Research such as those of Gómez-Guadix, De Santisteban and Resett, (2017) and Alonso and Romero (2019) find relations between sexting behaviors and personality factors such as Extraversion and Conscientiousness that belong to Goldberg's Big Five Model. As in other studies, the evolution of behavior with age or the need for popularity also becomes important (Casas, Ojeda, Elipe, & Del Rey, 2019; Alonso-Martínez, 2016). These findings allow us to approach a more exhausted preventive method. According to Villacampa (2017) the overall lifelong prevalence of engagement in sexting, in Spanish adolescents between 14 -18 year, is 33.5%. And there is no significant difference comparing boys' and girls' behavior.

The **main goal** of this study is to create a qualitative approach about the quantitative studies that have been carried out at a national level on sexting in adolescents and know what psychosocial variables are related to this type of behavior.

## METHOD

To carry out the literature review in a correct and prescribed manner, the PRISMA Method has been followed as much as possible (Urrútia & Bonfill, 2010).

- ✓ Keywords: Sexting, Spain and adolescents.
- ✓ Inclusion factors:
  - Studies between 2015-2020
  - Teenagers as a sample
  - Spanish studies
  - Full study acces
  - Written in Spanish or English



## RESULTS

AUTHORS	SAMPLE	RESULTS
Chacón, Caurcel & Romero, 2019	n = 899 ♂ 44.16% ♀ 55.84% Age range: 18-24 M: 20.84 / SD: 1.90	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Greater use of sexting in man</li><li>• Progressive increase in the use of sexting with age (from 18 "12.90%" to 21 "16.46%"), then decreases to 24 years by 11.24%</li><li>• There is no relationship with self-esteem</li></ul>
Gámez-Guadix & De Santisteban, 2018	n = 1208 ♂ 47.20% ♀ 52.80% Age range: 12-16 M: 13.57 / SD: 1.09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There is no significant difference in the use of sexting by sex</li><li>• Factors that increase the use of sexting in T2 (time 2 in a longitudinal study):<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Conscientiousness (-.07**) , Extraversion (.09***), Depression (.08**) y Age (.09***)</li></ul></li></ul>
Alonso & Romero, 2019	n = 624 ♂ 45% ♀ 55% Age range: 12-19 M: 14.35 / SD: 1.55	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sexting prevalence increases from 39.9% to 44.4% with age</li><li>• Predictors of sexting are: High Extraversion and low Agreeableness and Conscientiousness</li><li>• Low victimization related to the need for popularity</li></ul>
Gámez Guadix, De Santisteban & Resett, 2017	n = 3223 ♂ 49.1% ♀ 49.9% 1% no indicated Age range:12-17 M: 14.06 / SD: 1.37	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sexting prevalence increases from 3.4% to 36.1% with age.</li><li>• Significant relationship with high Extraversion and low Conscientiousness</li></ul>
Casas, Ojeda, Elipe & Del Rey, 2019	n = 1431 ♂ 53.6% ♀ 46.4% Age range: 11-18 M: 13.61 / SD: 1.31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In primary sexting (send or receive): Cyber-gossip and the need for popularity predominate</li><li>• In secondary sexting (resend or receive from third parties):<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Resend: Cyber-gossip, need of popularity y normalization</li><li>- Receive: Need of popularity</li></ul></li></ul>
Alonso-Martínez, 2016	n = 190 ♂ 46.32% ♀ 53.68% Age range:15-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The actions related to sexting have a 16% stake.</li><li>• The most used practices are receiving: images (52.1%) and messages (50.5%).</li><li>• Every passing year, sexting is 1.6 times more likely.</li></ul>

## DISCUSSION

Research on sexting has grown in Spain in the last few years, especially with teenagers and the negative effects that it may have on them. This review show us that there are some personality variables that might be directly related with a greater presence of sexting behaviors such as: high extraversion or low conscientiousness (Gámez-Guadix & De Santisteban, 2018; Gámez-Guadix et al., 2017; Alonso & Romero, 2019) . The first one is associated with the search of new experiences and the second one with a lower control of impulses. These personality traits can give us some clues in advanced, about who is more likely to develop the behaviors of sexting. Besides this review has found that the more age a teenager has more likely is to do "sexting", because this behavior grows every year (Chacón et al., 2019; Gámez-Guadix & De Santisteban, 2018, Alonso & Romero, 2019; Gámez-Guadix et al., 2017; Alonso-Martínez, 2016). The last discover this study does, is that the "need of popularity" is a variable that have an effect in adolescents that make them do things like sexting to feel themselves appreciated by the group (Casas et al., 2019). The **limitations** of the study have been: the lack of research because it was limited at national level, heterogeneity in the instruments used even the personality tests were all about The Big Five Model and the prevalence showed here can vary because that depends on the sample and each study uses more or less amount of teens.

In **conclusion**, here we have some discoveries that we can use to prevent and teach adolescents about sexting. We can use the personality traits to detect who is a possible candidate, educate them in the risks of the Internet and its consequences, and also talk about that "need o popularity" that they are looking for. Starting in the early adolescence, and accompanying students in their growth with sex education programs that include sexting as one of the topics to be discussed. Moreover, it has been shown that studies on sexting in Spain are scarce and more research is needed to create adequate prevention programs. Explore about the personality in teenagers and which factors are related with "the need of popularity", for example self-steam, can be a good line of research for future studies.

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